

SONGS FROM NATURE

DANIEL M. PETERS





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**"THE FARMER BOY"
AND OTHER POEMS**

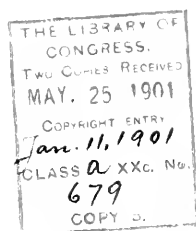
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DANIEL M. PETERS

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DANIEL M. PETERS.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE.

The author of "Songs From Nature" was born in the school district of West Hills, Long Island, New York, on February 10th, 1874. He is descended from an old American family. His father, Moses Peters, an estimable gentleman, owned and tilled the farm on which the present author was born, and which affords much of the scenery for his romance, "The Farmer Boy." From childhood he was imaginative and poetic. He thought deeply and Nature appealed to him, to be pictured in verse. The result is the collection of poems now offered to the public under the above title.

THE PUBLISHERS.



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SONGS FROM NATURE

A Farmer Boy

*A pastoral, romantic poem, in Four Parts, humbly
inscribed to Miss Marie Brewster.*

PART FIRST

When Night began to flee away
The chanticleer saluted Day,
And Morning Star, with failing eye,
Beheld the shadows swiftly fly.

Fair Day approached from out the East
And softly sipped her dewy feast,
And ere her cheek of crimson hue
Reflected on the Heaven's blue
The farmer boy awoke from sleep;
From dreamland where the Fancies keep
A gala time; when they reveal
Their forms, as o'er the mind they steal.

Songs From Nature

He recognized that Night had fled
And quickly left his cozy bed ;
He stroked his hair, all flaxen curled,
While swiftly through his mind there whirled
His morning work as it should be.
He rubbed his eyes, and tried to see,
And wished that he could sleep away
Until the broader break of day ;
And wished a score of other things,
And almost wished that he had wings
With which to fly from all he knew,
And have no morning chores to do.

When he had dressed he quickly went
Outdoors to get the greeting sent
Unto him from the morning sky ;
'Twas Moon's "good morning" and "good-bye."
"Fair Moon," thought he, "you see the earth
From death of Day till Morning's birth ;
You see the good, the bad as well,
And can you naught to mortals tell ?
O, Moon, that lookest far away,
And watchest for the coming day,
Inform me if there's any joy
For me, a humble farmer boy."

The Farmer Boy

The watchdog came in bounding glee
And stopped our hero's reverie,
For Rover loved the farmer boy,
And when he saw him barked for joy;
'Twould follow him throughout the day
And in the ev'ning with him play.
He stroked his faithful canine friend
And toward the barn his way did wend,
While robin's song beyond compare
Did sweetly vocalize the air,
And catbirds in the cherry trees
Trilled out their mocking minstrelsies.

He op'd the door, when on his ear
Fell all the mingled morning cheer
Of live-stock's bleat, and low, and neigh,
Which said: "We wish you happy day,
We wish you all that you may need,
And, by the way, we wish some feed."
The while his work went light along
He sang this little lover's song:

*Listen, my darling one,
Hear me, I pray:
Thou art the glowing sun
Of my life's day.*

Songs From Nature

*If thou art by my side
Nothing I'll fear;
Wilt thou be my fair bride?
Tell me, my dear.*

*Dearest, my inmost soul
Clings unto thee;
And while the years shall roll
Ever 'twill be.*

*Thy face is fair to me,
Thy form complete;
Hear, while I bow to thee,
Low at thy feet.*

*Thy soul I know is pure,
Thy senses fine;
Thou art and shalt endure
Almost divine.*

*Who would not love thee well
If he but knew?
Hear me, then, while I tell
Love that is true.*

The Farmer Boy

The farmer had some fertile land,
And had some money, too, on hand;
He was a surly, crabbed man,
Who never fancied Nature's plan.
If it was cold he'd have it warm,
If it was fair he'd have it storm,
If it was wet he'd have it dry—
If he could rule both earth and sky.

His only child, a daughter fair,
Whose lovely, long and flaxen hair,
Expressive eye and glowing cheek,
Whose changing tints did ever speak,
Whose perfect form and modest mien,
And carriage graceful as a queen,
Made her the fairest to be found
Among the girls for miles around,
Was heir to all his fertile land.
He hoped to give her lovely hand
To some young suitor with estate,
But she thought not of wedlock fate.

Her heart was light and full of joy,
Her soul was pure without alloy,
Her disposition soft and kind,
More pleasant girl one could not find;
And she was often heard to sing
A song of welcome unto Spring:

Songs From Nature

*O, rosy cheeked, laughing eyed Spring, you are
here;
I heard your sweet voice with its message of
cheer;
I love your young beauty each year to behold,
In green and pink dresses and bonnet of gold.*

*Old Winter your frolic and music doth dread,
And in his white cloak he has gone to his bed;
About you the fruit trees their blossoms they
strew,
And flowers are nodding their welcome to you.*

*The lambs catch your spirit and leap all around,
For Frost King has fled from his throne in the
ground;
The birds introduce you with beautiful songs,
You come to deal justly and do us no wrongs.*

*We give you our loyalty, join in your mirth,
Proclaim you the queen of the verdure clad
earth.*

*Then Spring had come and heard the lay
That met her ear from day to day,
And well might Spring incline her ear
A voice so beautiful to hear—*

The Farmer Boy

Though Spring's flow'r-laden hand was seen
To clothe the earth in verdant sheen,
Though Spring made musical the breeze
Which wandered through the forest trees,
Though Spring from Southland brought along
The gaudy feathered birds of song
That all the day in sylvan dell,
Or sunlit treetop, love so well
To strain their little throats to sing
Their praises to the charming Spring.
Though Nature's voices joined in choir,
To chant her praises did aspire,
Yet Spring ne'er heard a voice more sweet,
Saw form more charmingly complete,
Nor ever saw a mortal face
More fair, in all her lengthy race.
And Spring stood listening while rang
The notes the farmer's daughter sang.

Our heroine did rove a while
About the orchard to beguile
The time, by watching, o'er the grass
The fleeting shadows swiftly pass.
She watched them leave the distant hill,
Pursued by light, and watched until
They moved across the vale and drew
Each moment nearer, and they flew

Songs From Nature

Beyond her, urging still their flight
Till woodland hid them from her sight;
Or saw the sunlight by the breeze
So weirdly filtered through the trees.

She loved dear Nature's beauty rare,
And loved—ah, love would not stop there;
There was a love she would not tell,
Which in her heart did sweetly dwell.

The while she mused beneath the tree
The neighbor's son had come to see
And talk with her, and on his way
Had gathered a superb bouquet
Of flowers, which, with bashful air,
He fastened in her lovely hair.

They talked of crops, and birds, and bees,
And of the blossom-laden trees—
Restrained by love's evasive art
He said not what was in his heart—
Their conversation led full soon
Unto the race that afternoon,
For six good horses would be in
And each one had a chance to win.
She said, with little glance aside:
"The farmer boy intends to ride

The Farmer Boy

Our racer, and I heard him say
That he would win the race to-day."
If he had seen the gentle flame
That lit her cheek when that dear name
To her, "the farmer boy," she said,
His hopes would rapidly have fled.
But man, when loving womankind,
Is rendered deaf and dumb and blind.

The hours fled by, and at the place
Where would occur the running race
The people gathered, and a gay
And merry crowd they were that day.

The men in groups were forming fast
And talking of the races past,
Of rider and of racing horse,
And the condition of the course.

The time had come to start the race ;
The racers came. Each rider's face
Was firmly set. The horses knew
Exactly what they ought to do.
They faced the starter, then the words,
And they were off. As swift as birds
They flew along the course. At first
There was a very rapid burst

Songs From Nature

Of speed, and then they slower ran
Until the second mile began.
The farmer's horse, with easy stride,
Was running well, and kept beside
The pride of all the country round;
A lovely horse, whose ev'ry bound
Revealed a store of strength suppressed,
Which argued ill for all the rest.

When all but half a mile was run
The final struggle was begun.
The last two horses showed their speed
And soon the fav'rite had the lead.
The farmer's horse, not half a length
Behind, revealed his staying strength.
They ran into the stretch abreast,
And far ahead of all the rest;
And then the final struggle told
The horse that should the trophy hold.

Our hero spoke some words of cheer
Unto his horse, and it did hear.
It loved the farmer boy, and knew
What he expected it to do.
Though short the race that yet remained
Its muscles and its sinews strained;
Like arrow o'er the track it sped
And crossed the line a neck ahead.

The Farmer Boy

PART SECOND

'Twas winter time ; the sun on high
Was shining from a cloudless sky,
And through the frosty air its glow
Met little else than ice and snow.
The eye beheld a lovely sight
In Nature clad in garment white,
And decked with diamonds, ev'ry one
A brilliant offspring of the sun.
The lakes the dazzling style obeyed
And each a crystal garment made,
For robe of beauty, and to save
The creatures living in their wave.
O'er that transparent cloak so bright
The skaters glided with delight.
How safely God doth keep the earth !
Though we imagine that its worth
Is very little in the Eye
That guards the countless worlds on high.
Yet He doth watch the blades of grass,
And all the insects which we pass

Songs From Nature

And seldom have the slightest thought
How marvelously they are wrought.
But He above who gave them birth,
And knows their duties, knows their worth.
When hoary Winter cometh forth
Upon the tempest from the North,
Intent on slaying ev'ry one
Of those wee lovers of the sun,
The crystal cloak is placed o'erhead
To shield them from his freezing tread.
Is not it just that field and wood,
In springtime, whisper, "God is good"?

The snowbirds sang their simple lay
More blithely on the holy day,
When Earth assumed her festal mirth
In honor of the Saviour's birth.

As soon as all the chores were done
The farmer's boy was seeking fun;
And, knowing nothing else to do,
He took the long bob-sled, and drew
It up the lengthy westward hill
And coasted there alone, until
The farmer's daughter came to see
Him sleighing, and was pleased to be
A partner in the winter joy,
When asked to by the farmer boy.

The Farmer Boy

"Love lightens labor," people say,
And love gives happiness to play.
The joyful hours flew swiftly o'er
Them, while the sun did higher soar,
When swiftly down the hill they sped
Like them the moments quickly fled.
And when he drew the sled, as back
Along the smoothly beaten track
They walked, conversing, side by side,
And each endeavored hard to hide
The love so manifest that each
Revealed it plainer than by speech,
The time, thus charmed by love, did flow,
Did swiftly and unheeded go.

At length they saw the winter sun
So near the zenith that the fun
Of coasting for the time must end;
And while the pair did homeward wend
The boy decided to implore
The charmer whom he did adore,
And strive to win her heart and hand
(He cared not for her father's land).
The while he formed his dear request
His heart was thumping in his breast;
So prettily he would propose,
His words would win his fiercest foes.

Songs From Nature

He started—failed—observed her charms,
And then he clasped her in his arms
And stammered: "Darling!" That sweet name
With overwhelming passion came
From his pale lips. He could not speak
Another word, and down his cheek
The teardrops ran. She gently freed
Herself and answered: "There's no need
For you to say the rest; release
Me, and that silly sobbing cease.
I know what you desired to say;
You'll feel the passion but a day;
You'll change your mind; I think that some
More handsome girl will soon become
Your sweetheart, and you will forget
That ever thus your cheeks were wet.
I think your passion cannot last
Till all the years of life are past."

I would not spoil a picture fair,
And so I left the couple there;
And to the mother took my way,
And listened on the Christmas day,
The while she sang about the birth
Of God's own Offspring come to earth:

The Farmer Boy

*Jewish priesthood in the temple
Worshipping the great I Am;
Seeking to approach His presence
Through the sacrificial lamb.*

*Learned Grecian ever yearning
For the God of truth and grace;
With the lamp of research turning
Through the dark to ev'ry place.*

*Worshippers of fire and brightness,
With their astronomic gaze,
Looking for the star of promise
Pointing God-ward with its rays.*

*Rude barbarians accepting
Anything to be their shrine,
Though unknowing ever yearning
For their Maker, the Divine.*

*But unto some lowly shepherds,
Came the wished-for, joyful word;
"Go to Bethlehem and find Him,"
Was the carol that they heard.*

Songs From Nature

*Found in Bethlehem of Judah,
He the great and undefiled;
Wonder of all wonders was it,
There they found a little child!*

*Nestling in that lowly cradle,
With his mother and his God,
Lay unknown the long-sought Saviour,
Who high heaven's halls had trod.*

*Still among us He is reigning,
Angels from the courts above,
Whisper softly through the silence,
God is pureness, wisdom, love.*

The sun was wending westward fast,
And had beyond the zenith past;
And bent its warm, benignant smile,
Upon the narrow vale the while,
Where moved without a hope or joy,
Our loving, lovely, farmer boy.

He had been hearing all the morn
The bay of hound, and hunter's horn,
But all was silent then, the chase
Had moved unto some distant place.

The Farmer Boy

He thought that he could join it, though,
And quickly set about to go.
He saddled him a hunting horse
(For he was favored by the boss,
To take a horse, a dog, a gun
On holiday, and have some fun).
He called his dog and got his horn,
Then mounted and was quickly gone.

To southward, silently and slow,
The farmer boy at first did go.
Upon his right thick timber grew
On hills which hid the westward view,
And on his left was level ground
Where traces of the chase were found.
Beyond that open valley stood
The eastward hills, all clad in wood.

He rode alert for any sound
Of hunter's horn or baying hound;
Nor did he listen long for these,
For faintly borne upon the breeze,
From eastward, seeming far away,
There came the first returning bay;
Another quickly joined the first,
And many voices in a burst

Songs From Nature

Of music, and the sounding horn
Were soon from out the distance borne.
The while the chase was drawing near,
From bass to tenor he could hear;
He guessed the place where they would cross,
And to it swiftly rode the horse.

He had no more than reached the place
When Reynard ran with easy grace
Across the open where he stood
And vanished in the western wood.
From out the woods the dogs appeared,
With easy bound the fences cleared;
Across the field in line did run,
And vanished toward the setting sun.
Behind the dogs with shout and blast
Of horn the hunters followed fast;
Then up the hill with steady pace,
The horses followed up the chase.

They gained the summit and did rest
A moment on the airy crest,
Expecting that the cunning game
Would soon return the way it came,
While swiftly toward the valley went
The dogs, attentive to the scent,

The Farmer Boy

And though they shortly reached the vale,
They still pursued the westward trail.
'Twas plain that Reynard had not turned,
And from the fact the hunters learned
That it was running for a den
To westward somewhere, and the men
Consulted, but they did not know
Just whereabouts the fox would go;
They all decided to employ
The knowledge of the farmer boy.
"I think," said he, "it means to go
To Pine Hill, west six miles or so."
That he was right they all agreed;
And also thought that he should lead.

So swiftly west the horses sped
And soon the farmer boy had led
The men to Pine Hill, where they stood
And viewed the valley, field and wood.
And heard the swift approaching chase;
'Twould reach them in a little space
Of time; the dogs were running fast,
The chase was close and could not last.

The baying hounds soon reached the hill,
When suddenly they all were still,

Songs From Nature

The cunning fox had reached its den ;
They might have dug it out, but then
The sun was setting. They would give
The fox its freedom, let it live ;
For they had had a merry chase,
So happily they left the place.

The farmer boy moved slow behind,
For still he had within his mind
The youthful passion in his breast ;
It would not cool and would not rest.
Although she did not answer "yes,"
She said her "no" with a caress ;
And was it kindness in her heart
That caused such gentle, girlish art
To form her answer? Did she fear
His hatred for one held so dear?
Or was it possible that she
Had loved him, loved him secretly,
And feared to let that love be known
Because she dared not trust his own?
He hoped, he feared, and slowly rode
Unto the place of his abode.

The Farmer Boy

PART THIRD

'Another year, and Summer past,
Again, fair Autumn came at last,
And brought a cloak that did appear
Adapted to the aged Year.
The Frost King with his magic hand,
Had trimmed the dress and made it grand
With oaks of purple, red and green,
With maples red and yellow sheen;
With birch and poplar leaves that fade
Into a creamy, yellow shade,
When touched by his destroying breath,
And look their loveliest in death;
With many-tinted forest trees,
With corn stalks rustling in the breeze,
With yellow fruit and golden corn,
And in the bracing Autumn morn
The gown was beautiful and bright;
And was the aged Year's delight.
Though then the Year was very fair,
There seemed a sadness in the air.

Songs From Nature

'Twas morn, remaining in her room
And feeling there a partial gloom
Of mind, the farmer's daughter saw
Afar the village of Breslau,
To southward, and the houses there
Were nestling in the valley fair.
Their window panes revealed the gleam
Of morning sun before its beam
Could reach her o'er the eastward hill.
She sat there meditating till
Her mother brought some news to cheer
Her heart. Said she: "Your cousin's here;
Though unexpectedly she came
She's very welcome, just the same."

Our heroine made haste to greet
Her cousin. It was quite a treat
To have a youthful friend to stay
And help to pass the time away.
That afternoon the happy pair
Did stroll into the swamp, and there
They picked the grapes that thickly clung
Unto the vines which ran among
The trees and bushes. They were sweet
And luscious and the girls did eat,
And heard the mournful Autumn song
Of robin floating light along,

The Farmer Boy

And saw the squirrels run about
And pick the choicest acorns out,
For food when dreary Winter's snow
Should round their home nest fiercely blow ;
Saw wild geese southward journeying
Upon their nearly tireless wing.
(With clamor high they ever show
A letter as they onward go.)

The ev'ning came and brought its gloom,
But cheer was in the farmer's home.
The neighbor, with his wife and boy,
Had come to share the ev'ning's joy.

The homemade candles, in a row
Upon a mantel, sent a glow
About the room, and by their light
We note the things that met the sight:
Board ceiling, rough, with open seams,
On hand hewn, whitewashed, oaken beams ;
The stone built fireplace, long and wide,
The iron trummels hung inside ;
Some logs on andirons were laid,
(The ev'ning fire had not been made) ;
The table held some apples, fine
Sweet cider, grapes, fresh from the vine,

Songs From Nature

Tobacco, nuts, milk, cake and each
Thus placed within the housewife's reach;
The half-door, spinning wheel and loom.
The steps that led up from the room.

Unto the fireplace went the sire
To start the lovely, open fire;
The blaze was shortly leaping high,
And sparks were soaring toward the sky.
It threw a gay and dizzy light,
About it moved with happy flight
The shadows, dancing here and there,
So queer, so flitty and so fair;
And there was warmth and joy and mirth,
The sweetest pleasures of the earth.

The sires and matrons chatted, told
The latest news; told stories bold,
Of actions brave in martial host,
Or ventures with suspected ghost,
Of what the witches often did,
And where the pirates' gold was hid.

The farmer then a story told
About a Winter, long and cold:
How his forefather from abroad
Had journeyed here to worship God

The Farmer Boy

In his own way and in a land
Afar from any tyrant's hand;
And built a house so near the shore
That he could hear the breakers' roar,
And forest tall, with song and sigh,
Reply unto their sad'ning cry;
And lived together with his wife,
Who helped to smooth his path through life.
They trusted God and much endured,
And through their faith they were assured
The land their pilgrim feet had pressed
Unto their children would be blessed.

Within another room the boys
And girls partook of youthful joys;
With mirth and music flowing free,
A gentle tide of jollity.
A negro fiddler who had been
The young folks' friend through thick and thin;
Whose fiddle was his constant friend,
Did love such parties to attend,
And play for song and play for dance,
And get some money, too, perchance.
He'd either stand erect and tall,
Or sit and lean against the wall;
His face would show each changing theme
In all the music's joyful stream;

Songs From Nature

Expressions o'er his face would float
In sympathy with ev'ry note;
His eyes would gleam with joy or pain,
According to the music's strain.

The farmer's daughter entertained
The neighbor's son, and though she feigned
Enjoyment, yet her thoughts would turn
To him, for whom her heart did yearn—
The farmer boy—if only he
Were then beside her, swift would flee
The golden-winged hours of joy
O'er her, beside the farmer boy.
And oft in game and oft in dance
Her eyes did meet his sparkling glance;
The meeting of their eyes did prove
The presence of an ardent love.
For there is known, no cunning art
To hide the secrets of the heart;
For love will live within the eye,
Those soul reflectors never lie.
They saw it and they understood
And tried to hide it, but the blood
Approached their cheeks with startled rush
And caused the flitting lover's blush.
Which says in language ever sure:
"The soul is modest, warm and pure."

The Farmer Boy

The merry ev'ning soon was past,
The parting time had come at last;
And while the fiddler played his best,
They sang a song, then went to rest.

* * * * *

Beautiful Autumn, the pride of the year,
Cheerful and brilliant, tho' sombre and drear,
All of thy harvests, too great to be told,
Circle about thee, a mantle of gold.

Softly thou sayest, o'er hill and o'er dale,
"Winter is coming with ice and with gale."
Trees take the warning and form a leaf bed
Over their roots, shielding them from his tread.
Autumn! we thank thee for nuts from the wood,
Thank thee for harvests so rich and so good,
Thank thee for fruit that is luscious and fair,
Thank thee for all of thy benefits rare.

The farmer thought 'twould help him some
To have the youths and maidens come
And husk his corn. He planned it out
And told the people all about.
The time soon came, a moonlit night;
The huskers had enough of light
From lanterns hanging on the beams
And sending out their feeble gleams.

Songs From Nature

A long board table had been made,
On which the corn was thickly laid.
Then each about it took his place,
And soon began the husking race.

The fiddler, who, of course, was there,
Made musical the ev'ning air;
The cider jug was passed around
And time flew by yet no one found
A red ear. While they husked along
They sang a simple husking song.

*Husk the corn with blithesome song,
Husk it merrily along;
Hurry, lads, and find an ear,
Red, for her you love most dear.*

*Mary's found an ear that's red,
You must find one quickly, Ned,
Or some other lad will kiss
Her, and rob you of the bliss.*

*Very happy huskers, we,
Gathered in this husking bee;
Age will bring enough of tears,
Blithe we'll pass the youthful years.*

The Farmer Boy

*Huskers, hasten, husk the corn,
E'er the ev'ning-time is gone.
Love will make the fingers fly,
Find a red ear, huskers, try.*

At length the farmer's daughter found
A red ear, and the news went round,
Then who would have the pleasure rare
Of kissing cheek so blushing fair?
The youths tried hard to find an ear
To match the one they held so dear;
The farmer boy soon husked one out,
And there arose a mighty shout.
He had a rival, though, for one
Was gotten by the neighbor's son.

The boys blushed deeply, neither moved
To kiss the girl, for 'twas not proved
Exactly which had found the first,
Then all of them with merry burst
Of laughter placed the lovely iass
Upon the table and did pass
Around her, shouting: "Look, and see
The queen of all the husking bee."

The corn was husked, and was begun
The dance to close the ev'ning's fun;

Songs From Nature

The fiddler, who had interviewed
The cider jug, again renewed
The music in a merry way,
To please the youthful dancers gay.
Thus happily the eve did end
And to their homes they all did wend.

Through all the night the neighbor's son
Thought sleepless of that fairest one,
Whom he had loved too well to kiss
Before the crowd; oh, what a bliss
'Twould be to clasp her in his arms
And glory in those matchless charms;
To gaze in her responsive eye;
To kiss her cheek, aye, he would fly
On wings of love unto her side
Could he but claim her for his bride.

The next day Nature flung abroad
Her cloudy curtain; fiercely poured
The rain; the howling of the gale
Was mournful in the narrow vale.

The farm work ceased; the neighbor's son
Before the dreary day was done,
Did call upon his loved one. She
Received him very charmingly.

The Farmer Boy

Their conversation went along;
He oft would speak his heart; but strong
And ardent feeling made him fail;
His cheek first flushed, then very pale,
His nervous and his bashful air
Did plainly to the girl declare
The struggle raging in his breast,
And she did plan her very best
To guide the pleasant talk away
From that which he desired to say.
But all her tact could not prevail,
He passionately told his tale.

Said he: "I called on you to-day
Not only my respects to pay,
I came to tell you all my heart.
I have no eloquence, nor art,
I only say that you have all
My love, my life within your thrall.
My thoughts, my dreams are all of thee.
Will you not give yourself to me?
I love you dearer than my life;
Oh, say that you will be my wife."

The timid maiden hung her head,
Then lifted it and softly said:

Songs From Nature

“My friend, I'd ever call you such—
My parents, both, admire you much;
I would not cause you pain, but know
A friend betimes must strike a blow;
And I admire you greatly, too,
But do not love you. Surely you
Can overcome this passion strong,
And love another girl ere long;
And one who'll give you in return
Her own heart's love. I could not earn
The honor you have given me;
I thank you for it heartily.”

The Farmer Boy

PART FOURTH

The seasons flew, and Earth was seen
Again in dress of lovely green;
The light and shifting summer breeze
Oft whispered in the leafy trees,
Then, 'mid the fruit, the farmer boy
Did very much of time employ
In picking peaches, picking pears
And lessening the household cares.
In other ways, he loved to aid
The farmer's daughter, and the maid
Was pleased to have him near her. They
Were oft together all the day.
The love they both had felt became
A warm and ever glowing flame.

The housewife recognized that they
Were far too happy all the day
Together; and were much too glad,
When private duty could be had,
To be together, for the tie
Of friendship only; and her eye

Songs From Nature

Oft marked them working blissfully;
Or marked her, 'neath the cherry tree,
Pick cherries from a lower limb
And talk unceasingly with him;
And thought the two had often done
Less work than might have been by one.
It was not long the farmer boy
Could her companionship enjoy;
The time for harvest came apace,
When he must work, and see her face
At mealtime only, and her fair
Young cousin from afar was there
Again with her. The neighbor's son
Was often with that lovely one;
And that did please the farmer boy,
For he would wish him ev'ry joy
With any girl, if only he
Would leave the farmer's daughter free.
On one fair morn the neighbor's son
Went driving with his chosen one.
Alone the farmer's daughter took
Her way along the little brook,
Which from the swamp, pursued its course
Along the roadside. Cow and horse
Drank regularly at its side;
It was the farmer's constant pride.
She picked some violets that grew

The Farmer Boy

Beside the brook ; their gentle hue,
So modest and so tender, made
Them beautiful to her. She strayed
Along, determining to go
Unto the spring from which did flow
The stream. The chirping squirrel sat
Upon the fence and, looking at
Her, sang its piercing little song,
To cheer the lazy hours along.
A catbird on a cherry tree
Did trill its pretty minstrelsy.
It knew that it could sing more sweet
Than any bird that she would meet,
Save thrush and robin, and in pride
It held its little head one side.
If any person troubled it
While singing, it would simply sit
And cry out : "You won't let me chant,
Because you know that you can't, can't!"
She walked along the brook, until
It led her up a little hill
And to the swamp, where ev'ry tree
Was filled with song birds fair to see.
Their songs uniting in the air
Made mingled music past compare.
Gray squirrels scampered overhead.
And forest flow'rs about her shed

Songs From Nature

Their fragrance. Soon she reached the spring;
In jumped a frog, the queer, green thing
Swam straight across and viewed from there
Her face, as if it loved the fair;
She knelt beside the little spring
And listened to its murmuring;
Her face reflected in its wave
And sunbeams quiv'ring in it gave
A fantasy, and made it seem
Like timid fancy's mimic dream.
She touched her lips unto its wave
And felt the cooling thrill it gave;
And then she saw 'twas near midday,
And started on her homeward way.

The maid walked homeward, slowly, till
She reached the walnut by the rill.
Beneath that spreading tree she found
The farmer boy upon the ground
Asleep. He sought that place to shun
The power of the noonday sun.
Unto his side she softly moved,
And placed upon the breast she loved
Her bunch of violets. He woke
Before she could retreat and spoke
To her. When she did turn
Toward him he saw the crimson burn

The Farmer Boy

Upon her cheek, but knew not why.
His rapid, searching glance did fly
About until upon his breast
He saw the modest flowers rest.
"I'm glad you didn't get away,
And many thanks for this bouquet;
It cheers me very much," said he,
"To know that someone thinks of me."

He ne'er before had seemed so fair
To her. His curly, flaxen hair,
His thoughtful eyes of clearest blue,
Which seemed to say his heart was true,
And in whose depths there ever shone
Not any thought of his alone;
But hope and fear and joy and grief
And faith and trust and unbelief
Did pass and repass in their flight
Across the azure liquid light
And it was sweet to see his eyes,
When expectation or surprise
Was mirrored in them, and his face
Was honest and without a trace
Of evil passions, and so clear
That any babe would banish fear
When it beheld the virtue rest
Upon that face with beauty blest.

Songs From Nature

No hardened look of secret sin,
To show a hardened heart within,
Nor wrinkled by the hand of care.
Nor withered by a cold despair.
His form was stately, tall and bold,
And of a strong, athletic mold.
If great Adonis walked the earth,
He lost his glory at the birth
Of this fair boy, whose beauty bright
Was not attained by human right,
But was obtained as a reward
For favor shown unto a God.

It may have been that from above
Fair Venus longed for one to love,
As none of earth did beauty hold
To keep her love from growing cold.
Or did Apollo, on his throne,
Get tired of reigning all alone,
And send a lovely one below
To represent his beauty's show?

She realized his beauty then,
And loved him more than ever when
He thanked her for the flowers she
Had given him. But then, said he,
"Tis time for me to leave you now,"
And left her with a pleasant bow.

The Farmer Boy

That afternoon the girls did climb
Mt. Jayne, and there a sight sublime
Met their admiring gaze. Away
To southward was the great South Bay,
A small and placid plain of blue,
O'er which the shadows swiftly flew.
With here and there a fisher's sail,
Or clammer's sharpie. O'er it soared
The sea gulls and the ocean roared
Against the great south beach, which hides
The bay from all the ocean's tides.

The little hills of whited sand
Were brilliant in the sunlight. Grand
Was ocean's beauty and extent,
To where the azure sky-dome bent
And kissed it, and the shadows made
In spots a somewhat darker shade
Of green upon it, and a ship
So near the finish of its trip,
Was stretching all its mighty sail
To catch the favorable gale,
Like wing worn sea bird seeking rest,
And flying swiftly to its nest.

To eastward were Long Island's hills,
Her woods and meadows, farms and rills,

Songs From Nature

To Montauk point; and eastward, then
For miles was lonely sea again.

To northward was Long Island Sound,
Connecticut's slow rising ground,
And ridge of hills, all forest browed,
That no more northward view allowed.
They looked northeastward and they saw
The ocean and the beach once more.
And saw Rhode Island hide from harm
'Neath Massachusetts' southeast arm.
It seemed she'd fear old Ocean's wave
Were not that arm stretched out to save.
The girls conversed a time; at last
The cousin said: "My dear, you passed
The time alone this morning; let
Me tell you something that as yet
I think you do not dream of. Please
Let me but tell you this, nor tease
Me, I have loved the handsome youth
Who took me driving, and the truth
Is, dear, I promised, on our ride,
That I would soon become his bride."
"My dear," our heroine returned,
"I'm very glad that I have learned
This, for he's such a noble boy
Your life will overflow with joy."

The Farmer Boy

'Twas ev'ning. 'Neath the walnut tree
Were two young lovers; they were she,
The farmer's daughter, and the lad
Whom she had once made very sad.
Some fairies in the peach trees hid,
Talked loudly of what Katie did.
She leaned her head against his breast:
He kissed her and—you know the rest.

The Soul of Music

To Miss Minnie Schenck, Pianiste.

There is a soul in Music, for it lives
And speaks to men through melody of sound;
Its form of harmony a halo gives,
Which doth illuminate its thought profound.

The life's not hid by flesh, nor bound by space,
For souls converse by action, eye and tongue,
By each expression flitting o'er the face,
By all the notes of ev'ry song that's sung.

The robin speaks the purest language known,
Each note a thought, each song describes the
bird.

We know its color by the feathers shown;
We know its spirit when its song is heard.

The harp, piano and the violin
May reproduce the player's mind and heart;
He sounds their chords; his soul is found within
The note; it mingles with his art.

The Soul of Music

Some angel visits the composer's brain
And sings a melody in one sweet hour ;
Performers then take up th' enchanting strain,
Till all the world has felt its magic pow'r.

Dear Music, ever point to realms above,
And lead to joys that lie beyond our tears.
Thy soul, O Music, is the soul of love,
The one all-soul of everlasting years.

Broken Strings

An infant took a harp that hung
Within the hall of time,
And struck its mystic chords, which rung
With melody sublime.

At first, its chords were few and cheered
The player by their mirth,
But soon within its tone appeared
Some sad'ning from the earth.

The years brought other strings and they
Enthralled the harper's heart.
For with each new string he did play,
With more endearing art.

But soon an unseen finger broke
The string that sweetest rang;
The player's heart received the stroke,
And felt a deathless pang.

Broken Strings

The other string seemed sweeter then,
And tenderer the strain,
But that strange hand came oft again
Till few of them remain.

But those which still join in the lay
Are beautiful as morn;
Sweet, soft and sad, they seem to say:
"The dearest are not gone."

So those few strings the more enthrall
The heart and this is why:
That hand unseen is fitting all
For music by and by.

The Philosophy of the Muse

Far greater than was Atlas, is the Muse.

She holdeth not the earth alone in air,
But all the countless worlds, dispersed profuse
About the azure dome men call most fair,
Are by the Muse held in their places there,
Or gently, strongly furthered on their way.
God gives the worlds into the Muse's care;
They're all the Muse's children. Day by day
She teaches them their duty, and they all obey.

The Muse is in the breeze and in the gale;

She rolls the ocean, gently laps the lakes;
She rends the canvas, softly fills the sail,
Uproots the forest and the aspen shakes.
She swings the scythe, the golden sheaf she
makes,
And ripples in the little running brook;
Establishes belief in facts, or fakes;
She teaches, studies, writes a charming book.
She fills the world. The Muse is ev'rywhere
we look.

The Philosophy of the Muse

The birds converse in music and in rhyme,
The trees all wave in concert, singing low.
Old ocean's billows roll in measured time,
And melody rides on the winds that blow.
The stars all move in metre, as they go
Along their course, and shine a poem each.
"A poem ev'ry flower is," they show
Unto the sight an epic grand, and teach
That God is in all, through all, striving all to
reach.

Nature's Song

Inscribed to Miss Addie Hendrickson

When I hear the breezes creeping
Through the treetops 'tis to me,
Angel whispers ever keeping
Nature sweet with melody.

When I hear the wavelets springing
Up along the whitened sand,
Then I seem to hear them singing,
Metred praises rich and grand.

When the pretty wild bird singers
Send abroad their wond'rous notes,
Then I wonder how God's fingers
Place such music in their throats.

Sorrow shades life's path of duty,
But earth recompenses wrong,
By the grandeur of its beauty,
And the sweetness of its song.

Nature's Song

Glowing sunsets, blooming flowers,
Autumn forests tinted bright,
Voices from the verdant bowers
Charm the senses to delight.

Jubal, in the magic sweetness
Of thy great invented note,
Thou hast copied the completeness
Of the chords in Nature's throat.

Music, teach me to be purer,
Speak to me of love and light,
Help my faith to rest the surer,
Be a beacon through the night.

L. of C.

The Robin's Song

The Springtime is come and the orchards
Are full of sweet voices and gay;
I hear them from morning till even,
I listen with joy all the day.

To hear the blithe robin, I linger
And list in the gray of the morn;
O, how I will miss the sweet singer
When, some day, its music is gone.

What song is more simple and loving,
Or more overfloweth with praise,
Or soundeth more sweet in the morning
Than that which the robin doth raise?

The Forward Cry of Social Evolution

To Eugene V. Debs.

"Advance! Advance!" the voice of ages cries.

"Broad future lies before us unexplored.

Advance forever!" thunders from the skies.

Though past misdeeds full deeply are deplored,

Ne'er swerve, ne'er faint, press ever onward,
toward

The brighter vista just within our view.

Through mountains we must climb and rivers
ford,

Yet look not backward, struggle for the new.

And we shall win at length because our hearts
are true.

"Assyria, Greece, Rome, Carthage, where are
they?"

Byzantium, Venice and Phœnicia, where?

And Egypt, Spain, the Ottoman obey

The law of time, for they must pass, and there

Will be but relics, that the world may stare

At that which was and never shall be more.

Napoleon, Charlemagne, Charles of Sweden,
bare

Songs From Nature

Remembrance speaks of wondrous feats of
war.

They rose through blood, and drowned them-
selves in seas of gore.

"Time sealed the fate of empires and of kings;
He freed the vassal from the landed lord.
Time cut the chain, and it no longer clings
About the black man. Though the sharpened
sword

Has often been time's instrument the broad
And sober mind of man's a better tool.
Time, teach mankind to think first of their God,
Then of their fellow man, and do thou school
The laborer to study much, nor be a fool."

We chase no rainbows over fields of thought,
Although our bow hangs over us all bright
With promise. Great works have been wrought;
But greater far shall be the deeds of might,
When from the darkness, mankind gains the
light
Of health and pleasure, honor, love and fame;
When jealousy, dishonesty, the blight
Of war shall fade forever, and the name
Of God shall stand for goodness, unto all
the same.

Life Ships

How sweet the day when o'er the youthful mind
 Float dreamily the thoughts of future years!
How sad to lose those happy thoughts and find
 That life is not as it to youth appears
When o'er our path float shadow-cares and fears,
 And eyes which looked for pleasure and delight
See many sorrows through their flowing tears!
 If they had seen the shades of manhood's
 night,
 Their sweet young joys would all have fled
 from such a sight.

Then let us praise the Providence that hides
 Away from youth the sorrow and the pain;
Which ride on time's forever flowing tides,
 That roar and groan along the rocky main,
Near which our ships of life do ever strain
 'Gainst adverse winds to beat their weary way
Unto the port they ever hope to gain;
 And trust that soon will dawn the morning
 gray,
 The pale-faced herald of the coming happy day.

Songs From Nature

O, happy thought, we may not always sail
 O'er seas wind lashed and decked with stormy
 foam,
For these life ships were built to breast the gale,
 And 'neath the clouds betimes to strangely
 roam,
E'er brilliantly, from out the central dome
 Of heaven breaks the splendor of the face
Of Him who built us and will guide us Home;
 And then before the free wind of His grace
 We'll wend our pleasant way to our eternal
 place.

In Memory of Little Frankie

Thou wert a winsome child, O vanished one!
The midday glory mirrored in thy face.
Thy cheeks were tinted by the ev'ning sun,
Thine eyes were taken from a heavenly place.
Thou wert so fair and hadst ev'ry grace
Which could be thine on earth, where thou didst
stay
Until the end of thy soon finished race.
And thou wert taken from our lives away—
Too pure and sweet for earth—to live in end-
less day.

And Thou didst clap thy hands when first thine
eye
Was fixed upon dear nature's beauty rare;
Thine eyes did sparkle, and thy lips did cry
In broken accents to the summer air
Which kissed thy cheek and tossed thy curly hair.
Thou laughed when lambs ran happily around,
And thou didst see that nature was most fair.
Thyself was pictured in the flow'r-decked
ground,
For thou didst never weep, and smiles were all
around.

The Leaves of Life

The fruitful tree draws strength from many
leaves,

The golden fruits of freedom, truth and love,
From many human lives their growth receive,
And each is rightly placed by God above.

From whence are we, and whither shall we go,
And why placed thus? But faith and time
can tell.

We have a duty, whether weal or woe
Be with us, let us do it well.

Farewell Lines to a Young Friend

Keep before thy constant thought,
Time is fleeting, life is short;
When thou canst, do thou improve
All the moments as they move.

Wealth is but a firefly glow,
Fashion but a trifling show;
Sin betimes a moment cheers,
But it doth react in tears.
Knowledge garnishes the soul,
Wisdom glorifies the whole.

Be thou wise unto the end,
That thou cling to ev'ry friend,
For a friend will never lead
Thee to any wrongful deed.

Character will live for aye;
Build it then with care each day,
Found the building of thy youth
On the solid rock of truth.
Richest talents in thy hand,
Thou canst make the structure grand.

Songs From Nature

Talents are high heaven's gift
Unto thee, that thou may'st lift
Mankind higher. Nourish thou
Good acquaintanceships; allow
No bad company to mar
Thy soul building. Keep afar
Evil passions; trust not love,
Till it's tested from above.

Fare thee well, press toward thy goal;
Soul is all, and all is soul.

Baby's Good-Night

Won't you come and kiss me, mother,
 Won't you come and kiss me, now?
For I've said my little, "lay me down to sleep."
 I must be up early, mother,
 While the dew is on the brow
Of the hill, and day has just begun to peep.

 I am weary now of waking;
 For I've been out all the day,
Catching leaves that softly fell from off the trees,
 And have helped the men hay-making
 In the meadow sweet and gay.
Won't you come and kiss me, now, dear mother,
 please?

THE END.

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